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SUBJECT: DAILY IRAQI WEBSITE MONITORING - September 18, 2005

SUMMARY: Discussion on the Constitution and Terrorism were the major editorial themes of Iraqi, Arabic language websites on September 18, 2005. END SUMMARY.

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SELECTED COMMENTARIES

[1A. "The Constitution Isn't a Divine Book"](#)
(Editorial by Hussein Ali Ghalib - Iraq World -
<http://www.iraqworld.net/article.php?section= articlemain.iq>)

"How many discussions were held and how many topics were written about the expected Iraqi constitution? Some criticize it; others reject it; and some want to modify a few of its points. We discovered that parties and people were pleased with it and accepted all its various articles. This is a good thing-to witness how our people and different parties dealt with these topics.

"But the constitution is a specific document that our state and people follow. It is not a divine book which should not be changed or modified. In all the constitutional experiences that take place in various countries, people or their representatives can easily and simply modify any article or item in the constitution. We are witnessing an era where a lot of things are changing; we are part of this era and we should cope with it or be affected by it.

"Any change to an article or item in the constitution should be in accordance with the people. We do not want to relive the past where the criminal Saddam (along with and regime) said, 'I'm the one who writes the constitution's article and I'm the one who deletes any item in it, it's a mere piece of paper.' We do not want this kind of pathetic talk. This constitution, in whose drafting all components of the Iraqi people participated, should lead Iraqis to safety."

[1B. "The Bizarre Muslim Scholars Association"](#)
(Editorial by Abbas Al-Zebeidi - Kitabat - "Writings"
<http://www.kitabat.com / independent>)

"I believe the blood being shed each day in Iraq is the blood of innocent victims succumbing to criminal minds, with no means other than death to spread their ideas. The Muslims Scholars Association has condemned the latest string of explosive attacks carried out by Al-Zarqawi, who has endorsed the killing of Shiites. But this condemnation is a worthless one because it comes in the form of religious advice to Al-Zarqawi to step back from these actions. What advice and what religion could anyone use to address a person who has adopted the killing of innocent people in a brutal manner similar to the massacres that took place in Al-Kadhumiya? Couldn't they have described this criminal and those supporting him with their true qualities of barbarism and brutality?

"And the strange thing is that the Association is advising Al-Zarqawi to adopt an approach different from that taken by the Iraqi government supported by the occupation! This is very strange. How could you incite sectarianism and then blame others for it? Many innocent people were slaughtered in Tal Afar; the city had turned into a refuge for bandits for more than a year and after the government responded to the calls of the city's residents, it was accused of committing actions of a sectarian nature, as if the appropriate reaction would have been to kiss the hands of these criminals and those supporting them.

"The government is not restricted to only one sect; it includes Shiites, Sunnis, and others, covering all of Iraq from north to south. I am not saying that it is a perfect government, but it is non-sectarian and I believe that you are the ones who find it difficult, with your ill sense of

sectarianism, to see a Shiite assume the leading post in Iraq.

"We should live as brothers in Iraq, or else become victims. We should abandon this sectarian mentality, even though it might be difficult for some to understand the change, but we should return to the Qur'an that shows us how to live in harmony and share our lives in our homeland during both sweet and bitter occasions. Enough with all the bloodshed."

1C. "Towards a Tough Iraq"

(Editorial by Ragheed Ali - Al-Rafidayn - "Two Rivers"
<http://www.alrafidayn.com/independent>)

"Many voices are vocal in this critical era of Iraq's history; some support federalism, some do not. Some support the constitution; others do not. But the new Iraqi reality demands that many things be taken into consideration before introducing any new element into Iraqi society.

"The transition from a suppressive dictatorship to a democracy in which people demand to have a say in all issues is something new. It has created a gap in ordinary people's minds, leaving them in a state of incomprehension. On one hand, political parties impose their beliefs on people without any clarification of the terminologies, such as 'federalism,' 'democracy,' and 'constitution,' all of which are unfamiliar to Iraqis. On the other hand, Islamic movements place the same pressure on people by exploiting a sensitive topic in all societies' religions, but they overlook the first word that was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad: "Recite."

"The Lord called upon people to think and contemplate before demanding they believe, but this has never been expressed by Islamic parties, who always call for either rejecting or accepting a draft. No calls have been made to read it and then make a decision about the document. This could transmit the offensive message that only they possess mental capacity while others do not. In addition to this, we have the direct and indirect effects of foreign intelligence services acting in Iraq, leading to a situation in which Iraqis have been deprived of their right to decide-their decisions dictated by their political, religious, or ethnic background.

"How can Iraqis understand all these new concepts while carrying the heavy burden of the past? Can people overcome all the surrounding events of bloodshed, deterioration of services, and other mundane concerns accompanying them day and night? Can't you see we are asking regular Iraqis for more than they are capable?

"So we need to be careful when presenting new ideas to Iraqis and telling them to strongly support or refute on sound basis. The first step should be cleansing people's minds of all remainders of the past, excluding any external effects, and teaching Iraqis how to make their own decisions. People should know why they refute and why they support, and politicians should respect that. A tough Iraq can only be built through enlightening the people to make their own decisions regardless of allegiances to any faction other than Iraq."

1D. "Dr. Farid Iyar Errors on Constitutional Federalism"

(Editorial by Lateef Al-Wakeel - Al-Nahrain - "Two Rivers" - <http://www.nahrain.com/d/news/05/09/18/nhr0918e.html>)

"Dr. Iyar cited two cases that forbid Iraqis living abroad from participating in the referendum: the first is legal and the second is financial.

"The constitutional problem:

11. Dr. Farid Iyar said votes outside Iraq cannot legally be added to any three-province federation. If that is the case, we must ignore four million votes.
12. Iraqis will not decide Iraqism; rather, federalism will identify who is the Iraqi.
13. One does not have the right to vote because he is Iraqi; only people of the three-province federation have the right to vote for a constitution which includes all Iraq and every Iraqi.
14. The practical solution for provincial identification would be to use the province in which an Iraqi living abroad was born.
15. The more complicated problem is that a federal state is incapable of guaranteeing Iraqi rights.
16. Federalism bestows Iraqi nationality.
17. The second legal contradiction: All are equal before law. Here Iraqis living abroad are unequal before the law because they are Iraqis but not federalists.

"Writing a new constitution is an art form. It is a fair, honest, and sacred hardship understood through emotions, feelings, conditions, and ambitions.

"The error is not in peoples' nature or political conditions, but in drafting a constitution that ignores the

rights of Iraqis living abroad despite the fact that there are more than four million, (i.e. approximately half of the votes in the previous Iraqi election).

"While the cost of one vote was estimated at \$400 due to the inability of the International Organization for Migration to do its tasks, not a single Iraqi would be able to participate in elections if it were not for committees supporting the Iraqi elections. These voluntary and non-profit committees, assisted by embassies (after cleansing them of Ba'athist intelligence apparatuses), are able to participate in the referendum and elections and surely the number of participants will double--especially after the first experience. And this would not cost the Iraqi state one penny. It provides for democratic education, it promotes a good reputation for Iraq, and it guarantees a democratic constitution."

SATTERFIELD